



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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NOAA Establishes Separate Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Recreational Quotas for Private and For-Hire Fishermen *Small Entity Compliance Guide*

On April 10, 2015, NOAA Fisheries approved Amendment 40 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources (Amendment 40) of the Gulf of Mexico submitted by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). A final rule published in the *Federal Register* on April 22, 2015 (80 FR 22422), with an effective date of May 22, 2015.

Amendment 40 was approved by the Council to help stabilize the federal for-hire component of the recreational sector fishing for red snapper, provide the basis for increased flexibility in future management of recreational fishing for red snapper, and reduce the chance for recreational quota overruns, which could jeopardize the rebuilding of the red snapper stock.

Management Measures

The rule establishes two components within the recreational sector that fishes for red snapper. The components are:

- A federal for-hire component, which is comprised of all for-hire operators with a valid or renewable federal reef fish charter vessel/headboat permit.
- A private angling component, which is comprised of private recreational anglers and other for-hire operators who do not have a federal reef fish charter vessel/headboat permit.

The rule also establishes component sub-quotas and annual catch targets using Amendment 40's allocation of 42.3 percent to the federal for-hire component and 57.7 percent to the private angling component. This allocation is based on a historical time series of landings

(1986-2013) combined with a more recent time series (2006-2013). The component seasons will start on June 1 and end when the individual component's annual catch target is projected to be caught. A 20 percent buffer is applied to the recreational quota to obtain the annual catch target, which is then allocated between components. Season lengths are anticipated to be announced in late April or early May in a final rule setting the 2015-2017 commercial and recreational quotas.

Based on a sunset provision selected by the Council in Amendment 40, the management measures implemented through this final rule will end after three years unless the Council takes additional action. The Council is presently evaluating other measures to manage the recreational sector including regional management.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

Electronic copies of the amendment and final rule may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site:
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.